

HOUSE BILL 2723

By Campfield

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
Chapter 4, relative to early graduation
scholarships for certain students.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 4, is amended by adding
Sections 2 through 4 as a new part thereto.

SECTION 2.

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any secondary school student who
has completed all required courses or standards may, with the approval of the student,
the student's parent or guardian, and local school officials, graduate before the
completion of the school year.

(b) General education revenue attributable to a student who graduates earlier
than scheduled shall be paid as though the student was in attendance for the entire year
unless the student participates in the early graduation achievement scholarship program
in Section 3 of this act.

SECTION 3.

(a) A student who qualifies for early graduation is eligible to participate in an early
graduation achievement scholarship program.

(b) A student who participates in an early graduation achievement scholarship
program is eligible for a scholarship of two-thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) if the
student qualifies for graduation one (1) semester early, five thousand dollars (\$5,000) if
the student qualifies for graduation two (2) semesters early, or seven thousand five

hundred dollars (\$7,500) if the student qualifies for graduation three (3) or more semesters early.

(c) To be eligible for an early graduation achievement scholarship a student shall be admitted to and enroll in an eligible postsecondary institution no less than sixteen (16) months after early graduation from high school.

(d) An early graduation achievement scholarship may be used at any institution of higher education in Tennessee accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

(e) The scholarship program established by this part shall be administered by TSAC, which shall be responsible for determination of eligibility of students and for the distribution of funds appropriated by the general assembly for scholarships awarded under the program.

(f) Postsecondary educational institutions that enroll students receiving scholarships or grants under this part shall provide all information required by TSAC and THEC that is necessary for administering, reviewing, and evaluating such programs. TSAC and THEC may choose to collect data from higher education institutions or through the University of Tennessee system, board of regents or the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association. TSAC and THEC shall maintain confidentiality of individual student records in accordance with the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act, codified in 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.

(g) For students who graduate two (2) or more semesters early, to continue to receive an early graduation achievement scholarship, such student at an eligible postsecondary institution shall continue to meet all applicable nonacademic requirements for the scholarship and shall reapply for the scholarship upon attempting

twelve (12), twenty-four (24), thirty-six (36), and subsequent multiple of twelve (12) semester hours, as applicable.

(h) A student who is ineligible for a scholarship or grant in title 49, chapter 4, part 9, pursuant to § 49-4-904 is also ineligible for the early graduation achievement program.

SECTION 4. The state education finance funds attributable to a student who graduates early pursuant to Section 1 of this act shall be transferred to TSAC for distribution to an eligible student pursuant to Section 3 of this act.

SECTION 5. For the purpose of developing forms and rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act, this act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes this act shall take effect July 1, 2011, the public welfare requiring it.